

# VIETNAM COURIER

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## REPEATED U.S. REVERSES

### ◉ In Dau Tieng Region

At Ben Tranh Attacked  
For the Third Time: 500  
U.S. Casualties

### ◉ East of Saigon

A Second Thai Battalion  
Wiped Out

### ◉ In Tra Vinh Province

A Puppet Battalion Whit-  
tled Down

### ◉ In Four Mekong Delta Provinces

64 War Vessels and  
Launches Sunk Or Burnt

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### PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO SOUTH VIET NAM ARMED FORCES AND PEOPLE

Hanoi, March 16, 1969

To President NGUYEN HUU THO,  
President of the Presidium  
of the Central Committee of the South  
Viet Nam National Front for Liberation  
(with request to forward to our dear compa-  
trials, cadres and fighters in South Viet Nam)

**E**ARLY Spring this year, in their relentless and widespread attacks on the enemy, the armed forces and people of the heroic South displayed a very great skill and achieved very considerable successes.

I am very glad to send you my warmest and most affectionate congratulations. For all their heavy losses, the US aggressors have not yet given up their aggressive design and reconciled themselves to withdrawing their troops from our country.

Therefore, we must continue fighting with vigour and striking devastating blows till the US-puppets are thoroughly defeated and South Viet Nam is completely liberated.

I send you many kisses.

With affectionate and "determined-to-win" greetings,  
UNCLE HO

### TALKS have been held in

Hanoi between a delegation of the government of the DRVN led by Premier Pham Van Dong and the delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL led by Dr Phung Van Cung, Vice-President of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Front, President of the South Viet Nam World Peace Committee and President of the South Viet Nam Liberation Red Cross.

The two delegations have posted each other on the solidarity between the people and armed forces of both zones, on their fighting, production and building of the rear and on the brilliant victories won by them. On the basis of a perfect identity of views concerning the assessment of the situation, both delegations have reaffirmed that the urgent and sacred task now facing the Vietnamese people as a whole is to perseveringly drive ahead the resistance against American aggression, for national salvation, until total victory, in order to liberate the South, defend the North and ultimately achieve peaceful national reunification.

The talks were held in an atmosphere of brotherhood between North and South.

## TALKS BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM GOVERNMENT AND SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION DELEGATIONS



# NIXON'S LOSING WAR

TWO months after Mr. Nixon's inauguration, it is obvious that the new president of the United States is only continuing the Johnson-Nixon policy, and the Viet Nam war which was nicknamed "Johnson's war" is now more becoming "Nixon's war" as has been recognized by the American press.

The phrase "war escalation" which was so often heard under the former president, has recently been put back in use by news commentators, and this because of a set of potted facts.

While in North Viet Nam, U.S. aircraft have been carrying on spy flights and even indulging in bombing and strafing certain populated areas in spite of the U.S. undertaking to unconditionally stop its aerial bombardments on the whole territory of the DRVN. In South Viet Nam the U.S. air and aggression has been suddenly stepped up. Thousands of new troops and agencies have been sent to and the Saigon puppet army's strength raised to the level of 500,000 men. U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird just proposed that an additional \$500 million dollars be earmarked for the "modernization" of the Saigon army and that the budget for the Viet Nam war amount to 21 billion dollars in the coming fiscal year. Hundreds of "bombing up" and "population-leaving" operations are being mounted with unprecedented ferocity. Radio-Saigon reported that on March 2 alone the puppet army conducted 52 such operations, involving at least one battalion each, and NLF and VC forces in the border areas of the puppet army's South Vietnam consisting of 100,000 troops had been subjected for the last few months to day and night fire bombings which resulted in all life, property and loss of thousands on each side of the ground was reckoned with 12 units, 100,000 troops, deep bomb crater.

This war escalation, denied by President Nixon at his March 14 press conference in Washington, indirectly admitted by Mr. Laird himself as declared on Feb. 6, that is two weeks after the new governmental formation, found that the military policy of the United States was to keep up pressure in South Viet Nam while peace talks were going on. The International Herald Tribune also remarked on March 7 that for the last months, U.S. forces had been seeking a much military advantage as possible so as to secure a position of strength for the day when negotiations would reach a settlement.

It is this policy of war intensification advocated by the White House and the Pentagon which finds its reflection in public opinion in the world and the United States, and among U.S. senators as well. That Mr. Fulbright recently said he was "extremely disappointed" in Mr. Nixon's policy of the war in Viet Nam and that the United States had to bear "greater responsibility" is not de-escalating the fighting? And don't other senators among Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Gore, Mr. Clark, Mr. Javits, share the same views?

Stunning the tide, Mr. Nixon bluntly threatened at his March 14 press conference to "take action" if the "level of U.S. casualties is higher than we should tolerate." He also refused to envisage any withdrawal of U.S. troops until the puppet army and administration in Saigon were consolidated. In other terms, he publicly declared his intention to pursue his war-like and aggressive policy at the expense of the Vietnamese people.

Mr. Nixon undoubtedly tried to touch the chauvinistic string of Americans when he referred to the high of casualty figures in Viet Nam. But he only forgot that his people, including

the Vietnamese people, are entitled to the sacred and inalienable right of self-defence. And if he is not out of his senses, he must be aware that the only reasonable way to keep his American boys out of harm's way is to repatriate them, which is the very demand of their own fathers.

Mr. Haynman, the former U.S. delegate at the Paris talks, by chance hit it when he stated that the new wave of U.S. aggression has been suddenly stepped up. Let's see some figures relating to the first ten days of these so-called coordinated onslaughts: the targets of attacks included over 400 enemy positions in 30 cities and provincial capitals and one hundred

district towns and military sub-sectors. The assaults were also mounted against 35 HQs of the enemy from regimental level upwards, 38 airfields and 17 big logistical areas. They resulted within 10 days in 15,000 enemy casualties, including over 23,000 GPs and nearly 2,300 satellite troops. U.S. authorities themselves acknowledged that U.S. losses in troop strength were heavier than in early 1968. In spite of all their security precautions the U.S. command in Saigon were caught completely napping in regards to the time, direction, objectives, scope and methods of PLAF attacks.

The PLAF have thus fully deserved President Ho Chi Minh praise in his March 16 congratulatory message to the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam: "Early Spring this year, in their relentless and widespread attacks on the enemy, the armed forces and people of the heroic South displayed a very great skill and achieved very considerable successes."

THE message of President Ho has provided this accurate and concise assessment of the present situation in which the U.S. war escalation is being actively led:

"For all their heavy losses, the U.S. aggressors have not yet given up their aggressive designs and have not yet reconsidered themselves to withdrawing their troops from our country."

Enlightened, by this penetrating remark and exercising the legitimate right to self-defence inherent in every nation, our Southern patriots are resolved to rush forward and translate into deeds the following words of our people's venerated leader:

"Therefore, we must continue fighting with vigour and striking devastating blows, till the U.S.-puppets are thoroughly defeated and South Viet Nam is completely liberated."

In this effort, the 14 million South Vietnamese can be assured of the wholehearted assistance of the workers, peasants, soldiers and the support and approval of the entire progressive mankind.

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# THE NORTH - GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

## The Large Front Held Dear in the Workers' Hearts

(Notes on the NFL Delegation's visit to the Tran Hung Dao Engineering Plant)

THIS visit had been a long wished-for one. These Southern brothers and sisters had gone through such a terrible ordeal for all of us that who among us doesn't long to shake hands with them and proudly show them what we had done at the rear while they were toiling hard and accomplishing feats of arms at the front. People have been waiting for them, but not with folded arms. As in other enterprises, in the Tran Hung Dao Engineering Plant the workers have devoted their hearts and souls to production and taken part in all engagements for the defence of Hanoi against U.S. aviation.

However, the news came as a thunder bolt: the NFL delegation which had just arrived in the capital was to call at the plant! What a great honour for us! Let us rapidly make streamers of greeting. But above all let us strive to overfulfill the targets set for the first quarter. On the machines named after heroic Southern localities, the workers chalked

It is thus crystal-clear that Cabot Lodge did not want in good faith to return to the fundamental principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements. He wrested some portions of them to deceive world and American opinion. The re-establishment of the military demarcation line and the DMZ at the 17th parallel—according to him—was intended to separate South from North Viet Nam and to give a new lease of life to the puppet regime in Saigon, that is U.S. neo-colonialism there.

The man for whom legality is the least significant thing also insisted—and quite understandably—on the withdrawal of troops of both sides, naturally to begin with of the South Viet Nam Liberation Forces.

This is indeed a howling hoax. And in trying to wrench the Geneva Agreements to serve U.S. neo-colonialist war of aggression, Cabot Lodge is cutting blocks with a razor.

Who is the aggressor in Viet Nam if not the 600,000-strong American Expeditionary Corps supplemented by 60,000 satellite troops? The so-called U.S. "commitments" to the Saigon Government are juridically null and void as they challenge international law which requires the right of self-defence of various peoples, the 1954 Geneva Agreements and the formal demand of the U.S. Government to abide by its agreements (declaration by

Bedell Smith, at the closing session of the Geneva Conference). Moreover, the participants in the legal proceedings admitted by all democratic lawyers the world over—a puppet government in the full acceptance of the term—localities, the workers chalked

their pledge to achieve great productivity, high quality of the goods and a substantial saving of raw materials. Then, in a stirring atmosphere they have launched emulation drive to mark the event.

An elite unit, the team of woman fitters No. 11 decided to make of the reception day a model work-day. Its twelve members who were new hands two years ago, had rapidly acquired the necessary knowhow to become now top notch workers. They had distinguished themselves both in production and in plans. Extra, they had put in 1,377 extra-hours during the second half of 1968.

The first great works wonders. But the records broken and the targets reached filled them with less joy and zeal than the anticipation of the visit.

A similar enthusiasm could be sensed in the foundrymen who, to quote their directors,

was credited with many achievements in 1968. An emulation movement among them produced countless innovations and a considerable amount of raw materials saved. The annual plan of the works was fulfilled ten days ahead of schedule. The tempo was still higher this year. The team of block-motors No. 2, which had boosted its daily production from eight to twelve units, managed to turn out eighteen the day when the NFL delegation visited the enterprise, all though among the woman workers only one was fully qualified. Asked why she did not stay away from work to recover from her illness, an Hong replied with a smile: "How could I take a rest when the entire plant hums in honour of the delegation? My illness is nothing compared with the sufferings of our Southern brothers and sisters. They have continued to work, and she glanced with emotion at the presents offered to the

an elderly woman in Quang Binh province, plied on a small sampan between the two banks of the Nhat Le river and never failed to ferry across gamblers and other amblers under the rain of enemy bombs and shells. During a tough battle at Ham Kong bridge, Ngo Thi Tuyen, a militia woman of Thanh Hoa province, carried on her back 70 kilograms of ammunition across a vast field to supply the anti-aircraft batteries. Nguyen Thi Kim Hue, head of a team of Shock Brigade Youths in Quang Binh, helped her mates to complete ahead of schedule the repair of an important portion of road. During a fierce air raid Truong Thi Dien, a nurse in the same province, managed to rescue many people in defiance of all dangers. Even during

periods when enemy air raids were most frequent, women workers did not leave their factories and fulfilled their production plans. They have continuously been trying advanced techniques to raise productivity. In the first nine months of 1968, the women textile workers of North Viet Nam produced an extra 1 million metres of cloth for a present to the Southern patriots.

Despite multiple difficulties and obstacles caused by natural calamities and frequent raids by enemy planes and warships, the North Vietnamese peasants nevertheless, applied with success intensive cultivation. Many production teams led by women reaped five tons of

visitors: a centrifugal foundry-machine labelled "Hanoi-Hue-Saigon" and two brand new plowing machines.

AFTER the departure of the visitors, the enthusiasm mounted. The second gang of Team No. 11 made it a point to outstrip with the first. Mrs. Hoa, the youngest member of the group, worked without let-up at her lathe which bore the name of the South Vietnamese martyr Vo Thi Sau. As she had had the privilege of meeting and speaking with

the messengers of the South, her emotion would make her cry if she could not translate it into deeds. At the end of the day all the records set in the morning were bettered. Ho outstayed the champion of the team, commended a freckled, she burst out into sobs. "That is not enough," she said. "While I think of all that they do and endure there in their resistance against the Yankees, I'd rather work myself to death than discredit myself in their eyes."



The NFL delegation visits Nam Lien (Nam Dan district, Nghe An province), native village of President Ho Chi Minh

## NORTH VIET NAM WOMEN EMULATE THEIR SOUTHERN SISTERS

very exclusively composed of young militia women damaged on three occasions pirate warships of the U.S.-puppets. Truong Thi Khue, leader of a production brigade in an agricultural co-op in Vinh Linh area, has taken part in more than 200 battles against enemy planes, contributing to the grounding of many planes and the capture of several U.S. air pirates.

A great many women have joined shock brigades whose task is to create a high spirit of self-abnegation: disposal of delayed-action bombs, repairing roads and bridges or serving as nurses or messengers.

Many heroines have emerged during the arduous fight against the U.S. war of destruction. Nguyen Thi Shat,

the women of South Viet Nam, the women of North Viet Nam have proved to be their southern sisters' matches with remarkable achievements in the fighting as well as in production.

Tens of thousands of women have enlisted in the army and taken an active part beside men in military training and in the fight against the U.S. imperialists.

A few months after the launching of the drive, a group of militia women in the Hau Loc district, Thanh Hoa province, shot down a U.S. jet with infantry weapons. A year later, a unit of militia girls in Hong Hoa district, same province, got down a flight of two American planes. Nguyen Thi Xuan, a two-year-old militia woman in Quang Binh province, bagged by herself a Thunderchief.

In Le Thuy district, Quang Binh province, a shore bat-

poddy upwards per hectare in a year (as against 1.3 tons under the colonial and feudal regime). In particular, the production team led by Nguyen Thi Cu in My Na village, Hai Hung province, brought in a record 9,000 tons of paddy per hectare.

The women personnel of the Mother and Children Welfare Board has brought to fruition research on forty subjects connected with the health of mothers and children. Faithful medical workers of the Anti-T.B. Institute have found new methods of treatment which are as simple as suitable to the war-time conditions.

The government has conferred Labour Orders, Military Orders and Exploit Orders on hundreds of women who have performed meritorious deeds in production and the fighting.

Many women have been honored as heroes and have been elected Emulation Fighters. Several communities of women including 15 units of militia women have been decorated.

(Excerpts from an article in the **Minority of One**)

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# ITALIAN PEOPLE Staunchly Support Viet Nam

On Feb. 27, 1969, pursuant to his four of Western European countries, one of its goals being to enlist their support for American Viet Nam policy. U.S. President Nixon arrived in Italy. Hardly had he set foot in Rome, when he met with an angry protest from thousands upon thousands of demonstrators, turning out in the streets. While Nixon was having a talk with Italian President Saragat in the Quirinal, 7,000 students marched to the chanting: "End Viet Nam War," "Nixon go home," then staged a sit-in around the palace.

This was only one of the countless actions in support of Vietnam by progressive Italians, heirs to Garibaldi's tradition, who clearly realized that "Vietnam's fight is a good catalyst for the Italian people's struggle as well as for the struggle to progress the world over." (3)

## SINCERE AND FRIENDLY WORDS

ITALIAN workers and progressives warm sympathy with Viet Nam and strong feeling against the U.S. imperialist aggressors date back to the day when the Italian first troops in our country. Their sympathy is all the deeper as every day they witness offenses by American soldiers right in their land, in U.S. bases. On Jan. 9, 1966, 6,000 women in Reggio Emilia staged a demonstration, with such mottoes as: "We side with the Vietnamese women!" "The Italian government must not obey U.S. policy in Viet Nam!" and demanded that the U.S. imperialists relinquish their military bases in Italy.

Together with the Italian Communist Party, the Italian United Proletarian Socialist Party and other organizations like the Permanent Committee to Struggle for Peace and Freedom in Viet Nam, the Association of Italian Fighters in Support of Viet Nam, the Committee to Help Vietnamese Prisoners have hit upon many initiatives to rally and spur into action the masses. Many delegations of Italian peace fighters, women, youths and intellectuals have gone to Paris to greet, and pledge firm support to the delegations of the DRVN and the NLF to the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

Every event in Viet Nam rouses the Italian people's interest, from US massacres of South Vietnamese to its savage bombing of North Vietnamese villages and towns, from US imperialist barbarities during the general attacks and

simultaneous uprisings of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people in Spring 1968 to the splendid feats of the North Vietnamese armed forces, the 1,000th, 2,000th, 3,000th US planes. On March 8, 1969 on the occasion of the International Women's Day and the 9th Founding Anniversary of the South Viet Nam Liberation Women's Union, in Milan 20,000 people paraded in the streets, carrying DRVN yellow-starred flags and NLF flags, demanding that the US end immediately its war of aggression against Viet Nam, and protesting against the obscenity and perfidy of the US delegation at the Paris quadripartite conference on Viet Nam.

Madame Borelli, who carried a gold medal won in the war against fascism, said in a meeting of welcome to the Viet Nam women's delegation visiting Italy in August 1968: "My husband died 23 years ago but today on learning of the successes of the Vietnamese people from our Vietnamese friends I am happy as if I was on my wedding day. The Vietnamese people fight bravely valiantly against the US aggressors. Our Vietnamese friends are ready to make sacrifice for everybody. So each Italian must realize and support the Vietnamese people politically, morally and materially."

During her visit to Viet Nam, Mrs. Carmen Zanetti made clear to us that the fight of the Vietnamese people had had a good effect on a number of Italian who, for one reason or another, were formerly misled by reactionary parties. Some have now realized the truth and left the Christian Democratic Party in protest against its U.S.-inspired position on Viet Nam.

The stern indictment of U.S. imperialist crimes in Viet Nam made by Lawyer Lelio Basso at the Copenhagen session of the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal, the statements in support of Viet Nam by the President of the Milan Christian Trade Union Achil, by poet Raphael Alberti, a Lenin International Peace Prize winner, are treasured in the hearts of the Vietnamese people.

## UNITED SUPPORT TO VIET NAM AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION

The resolution on Viet Nam unanimously passed by the 12th Congress of

the Italian Communist Party, on Feb. 14, 1969, read among other things:

"The 12th Congress of the Italian Communist Party calls on all Italian democratic and peace forces to step up the activities of the broad masses now struggling against U.S. imperialism to help towards its complete defeat and the ultimate fulfillment of the Vietnamese people's aspiration."

In response to the Party's appeal, the Italian working class and labouring people have devised many innovations in support of Viet Nam: to work extra-hours, to contribute part of their wages, to collect medicine, to sell newspapers and books, to stage theatrical performances. The name of this paper - Viet Nam Courier - has been given by our Italian friends in the Viet Nam Committee - Italian section of the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal (2) - to a newspaper carrying news on the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression. Italian peace, intellectual, youth, women, writers and artists have worked out specific programs of action for each and every day. Thus in 1966, within a few days the Committee for Medical Aid to Viet Nam

managed to raise 30 million liras. Jacomo Manza, a well-known sculptor, presented to our people the money he got along with a 1967 Lenin International Peace Prize (nearly 30,000 dollars) and planned to make a statue of a Vietnamese woman guerrilla. Painter Carlo Levi has completed many valuable works on the people's patriotic resistance against US aggression and dedicated the proceeds of their sale to the Viet Nam funds. Many women have donated the most cherished, souvenirs of their wedding: a ring, a pair of earrings, a bracelet. Mrs. Pischel Colotti, a journalist, has translated many articles on the Vietnamese people's fight to acquaint the Italian people with it. Her book "Viet Nam Will Win" constitutes a valuable reminder and appreciation of the support and assistance of the Italian people, and regard it as a great stimulus for their struggle against US aggression, for national salvation.

What is more moving is that the Italian people have not spared their blood which they sent to Viet Nam to help save wounded soldiers at the front. In a town near Trieste, the population have contributed 300 litres of blood. All the metallurgists at a plant in Milan have worked forward in the "Give your blood for the Vietnamese people struggling against US aggression" drive, and many of them have donated blood up

to three times. Among the youths and students, there has been quite a movement to volunteer and fight in Viet Nam. In the two meetings with them in Rome and Venice, the Viet Nam women's delegation visiting Italy was repeatedly asked: "When can we Italian youths and students, who have volunteered to fight the Yankees in Viet Nam, set off?"

ONE cannot recall all the sincere words and the righteous deeds prompted by friendship of progressive Italians, who have been standing side by side with the Vietnamese people to fight for a common goal: to wipe out the US imperialist aggressors for the liberation of oppressed nations, for peace and security throughout the world. The Vietnamese people will for ever remember and appreciate the support and assistance of the Italian people, and regard it as a great stimulus for their struggle against US aggression, for national salvation.

A. T.

(1) Statement by Mrs. Carmen Zanetti, head of an Italian women's delegation during a friendly visit to the DRVN in Feb. 1969.

(2) Comitato Viet Nam Sezione Italiana del Tribunale Russell.

# NEW U.S. PROVOCATIONS AGAINST KOREA

THE spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam issued on March 14 a statement on the U.S. imperialists' new war provocations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The statement reads:

The U.S. imperialists are sending a great number of troops and large quantities of war means from the United States to South Korea for a large scale "joint mobile exercise" from March 15 to 20, 1969 together with U.S. occupation troops in South Korea and South Korean troops. This is an overt provocation by the U.S.

imperialists against the DPRK.

Ever since they had to sign the Korean armistice agreement, the U.S. imperialists have continued their military occupation of South Korea. Acting hand in glove with the Pak Jung Hi clique of puppets, they have provoked thousands of armed clashes in the temporary military demarcation line area, while savagely repressing the patriotic movement of the South Korean people.

The systematic armed provocations mentioned above are part of the U.S. imperialists' scheme to prepare for a new war of aggression

against the DPRK. They constitute serious breaches of the Korean armistice agreement and threats to the security of the DPRK and peace in Asia and the world.

The Vietnamese people and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam fully support the sensible position of the DPVK Government as made clear in the statement published by the spokesman of the DPVK Foreign Ministry on March 10, 1969. They firmly insist that the U.S. imperialists had been stepping up their aggression in Viet Nam. It is against the war escalation by the Nixon Administration that the South Vietnamese people rose up with energy and success. In so doing, they were only exercising their right to self-defence which entitles them to wipe out the enemy in any part of South Viet Nam. The U.S. aggressors were chastised while they were conducting terrorist operations against the people, they were punished in their military bases illegally installed in South Viet Nam. The Nixon Administration had to bear full responsibility for the useless death of the GIs.

The NFL envoy energetically protested the Thieu-Khu Huong puppet clique's crimes, especially against Buddhists in South Viet Nam. He

# KAN LICH'S

## Baptism of fire

General Vo Nguyen Giap and Heroine Kan Lich

It broke. The jungle was crowded in a dense morning mist. As soon as I (1) had given her her assignment, Kan Lich led the men off. Under her command was a squad of guerrillas reinforced by three members of the Liberation Army. Their mission was to surprise attack the enemy to draw their fire while other units of the Liberation Army would deliver

the main punch and wipe out the enemy. This was the first battle of Kan Lich, an unequal one at that, since the enemy was five times as numerous. "Never mind, we'll lick them all the same," Kan Lich reassured herself. Under her guidance the party quickly and secretly disappeared into the jungle and headed for the enemy-held hamlet. The nearer they got to the

hamlet, the sparser the trees became and soon enemy positions were heard quite distinctly in the neighbourhood. The lead team under Kan Trao's command almost came to a stop. Kan Lich-man up and seeing the anxious look on everyone's face, she told herself: "I am in command here. Who else but I should take the lead in these moments?"

She ran up ahead of the team. Soon the guerrillas could already see the glowing flames on the half-burnt cottages. A machine-gun kept spitting out long bursts in the direction of the forest border. Bullets whizzed past over the guerrillas' heads. "If anything should happen, let me be the first to be hit," Kan Lich thought. She hit her lips, stopped a little and quickened her pace.

Moments later, Kan Lich skillfully guided her group to a hut half destroyed by fire. Several puppet commandos were clustered around a pig roasting over some blazing thatch from the banyan tree. Their greedy eyes were glued on the pig, their rifles and outfits thrown pell-mell on the ground, and no one was standing guard.

Kan Trao gave a wink to Kan Lich for the signal to open fire. Kan Lich pressed his shoulders down and whispered: "Not until we're nearer."

"Right, let's go closer," a Liberation Army fighter added. "Now that we are here, let's look out the commandos' and settle their fates," she said with a terse firmity.

The guerrillas glanced at one another in perplexity. "If we can dispose of the head," Kan Lich explained, "the rest will be left to the enemy to decide without their queen."

"Let's get closer," Kan Lich. The COs often say soldiers: behind their troops' bullets. To judge the guards, Kan Lich took them by a long detour across a hill and approached the house from behind.

Looking in that direction Kan Lich saw many silhouettes of enemy troops in a house spored by the fire.

She sprang to her feet and beckoned her men to follow her. To lodge the guards, Kan Lich took them by a long detour across a hill and approached the house from behind.

Pushing her way up the steep slope, she received many deep scratches on her face, but her efforts to flatten the thorny bushes with her rifle butt.

As she was coming near, Kan Lich almost cried out of joy because the enemy unit

command was there. She could easily recognize three puppet officers because of the glowing yellow badge on their shoulder straps.

"They are going to have lunch, that'll make the job a great deal easier," Kan Lich decided.

A half-officer suddenly rose up, threw away his cigarette stump and said aloud: "Come on, men. Let's have a bite. Don't worry about the guerrillas. They won't dare take us up here." Kan Lich tried to suppress a laugh. She shot a quick glance at her comrades and bowed her left hand.

"Yes, come your own way."

The careless and effusive at the same time.

The three officers were hit in a twinkling.

Not until ten minutes later could the enemy regroup and their first puppet commando in the direction of the guerrillas. Her task accomplished, Kan Lich noticed the group to break contact. She was the last to pull out, covering the retreat with deadly bursts from her carbine.

As she was firing back, Kan Lich did not see a creeper that stood in her way. She stepped on it and fell. The troops rushed up, shouting hysterically: "Hey, the Vietnamese has stumbled. Come on, don't let her escape." Many others dashed up in a hurry.

An idea flashed through Kan Lich's mind: overcoming her pain, she clenched her teeth, sat up and crawled to the edge of the clearing yards away. Nimble as a panther she plunged into a bush to the left and snatched back to flank the enemy. More puppet commandos were coming to the scene for a search.

Just at that moment, a long burst of machine gun then almost point blank. Three of them fell immediately and the rest took to their heels. Two other rounds followed, cutting down two other men. Kan Lich smiled and said to herself: "What a pity! None of them would have escaped if all our men were here!" The puppet commandos ran better shelter for their lives into the open field in the village from where they made for the brook and their post.

After HO PHUONG

(1) PLAF Hero, Va. uncle of Kan Lich.

With the downing of two U.S. pilotless planes on March 19 and 21, 1969, the total number of aircraft lost by the U.S. in the DRVN since August 5, 1964 amounts to 3,272

# THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT MILITARY OPERATIONS

**A**S the PLAF offensives continue at an accelerated tempo since February 23, *Giai Phong* Press Agency goes last week details of important successes achieved.

The most remarkable ones were won on **THE SAIGON FRONT** clearly at the west and east of that city.

In **Dau Tieng** region, 60km northwest of Saigon, the Americans just suffered a crushing setback. On March 11, attacking the enemy in **village No 2**, the patriots killed and wounded 145 GIs and captured many others. On March 13, in **village No 22**, they put out of action 70 enemy troops and downed three choppers. Three days later, on March 16th **Ben Thanh** position, 60km east, southeast of **Dau Tieng**, was the target of a third attack (since February 23) in which the enemy CP as well as 2 infantry companies of Brigade 4, **Trope Lightning Division** and 2 artillery companies were wiped out after a two-hour battle—900 GIs were on the casualty list, 20 vehicles, including tanks and armoured cars, and

16 heavy guns destroyed or damaged. Let's recall that in the same position in less than 48 hours (between February 23 and 25) two U.S. mixed battalions, of about one thousand GIs, had been put out of action.

Further to the northwest, in **Tay Ninh** province, on March 8 last, southwest of the provincial capital, an enemy counter-attack was fought off: 160 enemy troops were killed or wounded, 4 choppers downed, 2 cannons destroyed. The following day near **Huê** 13 km west southwest of **Tay Ninh**, 130 enemy soldiers were put out of action. On the night of March 10, an American plane was shot down. The 12 of Brigade 1, U.S. Infantry Division 25, at **Trang Lon**, north northwest of **Tay Ninh**, 20km west southwest of **Tay Ninh**, were assaulted many times between March 2 and 7 and suffered 12 casualties.

On Highway No 13, 92km north of Saigon, the Amer-

ican base at **Quan Loi** was pounded by the PLAF artillery on March 12 and 13: 160 enemy troops including over one hundred GIs were killed or wounded, 6 helicopters downed or destroyed and 3 military vehicles destroyed.

East of Saigon, on the road to **Vung Tau**, on March 6, almost at the same time as the third successful engagement was being fought at **Ben Thanh**, the PLAF wiped out Battalion 3, Brigade 1, **Thai Black Panther Division** in **Helena** rubber plantation, **Loc An** village, near **Long Thanh**. It was the second Thai battalion put out of action in this locality within 10 days. In Saigon, the people's self-defence militiamen between February 25 and March 13 mounted at least 12 actions, chiefly against policemen and security agents. A police station in the second town-district and an electric transformer station near **Nguyen van Thieu** (Independence Palace) were blown up and about twenty ruffians and traitors punished.

**IN THE MEKONG DELTA**, the PLAF were particularly active in **My Tho** province, about 60km southwest of Saigon, between March 2 and 8. **Sinh Duc** base, HQ of U.S. Infantry Division 9, was ma-

ny times bombarded by the PLAF and 12 choppers and 2 cannons were destroyed and 3 vessels damaged. On March 15, the PLAF struck at the targets of the provincial capital such as HQ of puppet Infantry Division 7, a military sector (P. the base of two artillery battalions, the military training centre, the airport; 80 per cent of the installations were destroyed and more than one hundred enemy soldiers killed or wounded at the training centre and the base of one of the two battalions.

Meanwhile, 11 other targets in various urban centres of the province were also hit: 66 adverse troops (over 100 GIs) were put out of action, 11 military vehicles and 3 cannons destroyed. On March 15, **Huê** near **No 1** was put out of order by the destruction of an important bridge. **My Tho** which received on the night of March 10 a heavy artillery shelling.

Further South, in **Tra Vinh** province, on March 7, the PLAF badly mauled a puppet battalion by inflicting on it 250 casualties (including the battalion commander) in a rush at **Hiep**, about one hundred kilometres southwest of Saigon.

In **Ben Tre** province, on the night of March 14, a 5th wave of assaults was staged against the provincial capital, an important position in the provincial capital such as

airfield, artillery park, armoured car base, administrative offices, "pacification" teams, etc. putting 140 enemy soldiers out of action.

The enemy riverine task forces also sustained heavy losses: between February 16 and March 9, in 4 provinces alone, 64 vessels and motor launches were sunk or set afire.

**IN THE NORTHERN-VIET NAM** between March 13 and 16, **Cua Viet**, **Dong Ha** and **Tan Lam**, along Highway No 9, came under heavy PLAF fire, 450 GIs and troops (including 200 GIs) were killed or wounded, a puppet company near **Gio Linh**, an American company North of **Tan Lam** and a mixed company North of **Dong Ha**, were wiped out.

In the engagements on **Co Ca** Hill, west of **Hue**, between March 4 and 15, 350 enemy troops were now down and 14 choppers grounded.

The first ten days of March, in **Da Nang-Chu Lai** region where fighting is still raging, the PLAF killed, wounded or captured 1,100 adverse soldiers including 320 GIs, destroyed or destroyed 38 aircraft, mostly choppers, destroyed 23 military vehicles and overtook a troop train.

On **Quang Nam** province, South Korean Tiger Division lost 400 men and 8 helicopters in an operation to occupy **Nai Quang** (between February 27 and March 3).

## Saigon Tracks Down on Buddhists

**O**N March 15, 1969, the 9th Corps Area Field Tribunal sentenced the Venerable **Thich Thin Minh**, Deputy Head of the Buddhist Institute, Head of the General Department of the Buddhist Youth in Saigon, to 20 years' hard labour. Saigon information sources reported. Charged by Washington's henchmen with "having hidden rebels and concealed illegal arms and documents," **Thich Thin Minh** was arrested on Feb. 23, 1969, with 50 students of the Saigon Buddhist Youth, 8 students accused of "rebellion" and tried at the same time as **Thich Thin Minh** got penalties from 3 years' imprisonment to 20 years' hard labour.

Before the tribunal the Venerable **Thich Thin Minh** strongly refuted the government charges. A student shouted: "I am not guilty."

Following this fascist trial the Buddhists participated in numerous meetings and distributed leaflets severely condemning the Saigon administration. They stressed in a declaration that persecution of Buddhist should be expected to last as long as the "present government" was in power. They staged a "sit-in" in the pagoda of **Nguyen** to denounce the Saigon regime and demand the re-establishment of peace.

On March 10, the **Von Hanh** League of Buddhist Students sent the Saigon administration a resolution

demanding that the Venerable **Thich Thin Minh** and the imprisoned students be set free. The Venerable **Thich Thin Hoa**, Head of the Buddhist Institute, rejected the false accusation against his deputy and stated: "When the nation is in distress, Christians and Buddhists should get and struggle together." Buddhist superior **Thich Don Hau**, former chief representative of the Viet Nam United Buddhist Church in **Van Hanh** and **Thich Thin** area, deputy chairman of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, made public a declaration against the fascist measure taken by the **Thieu-Kieu** clique, calling on the Buddhists believers and the South Vietnamese people to join forces to overthrow the latter and help set up a peace cabinet.

One day after the trial, Buddhists held a meeting in the **An Quang** Pagoda against such an "inhuman" measure. In their statement, they denounced **Nguyen Van Thieu** for having "taken advantage of the support of foreigners (U.S. imperialists, Editors) to carry on **Nguyen Dinh Diem's** program aimed at annihilating Buddhism in numerous and savage ways.

It will be recalled that Buddhists in Saigon and other South Viet Nam cities had done their bits in toppling **Nguyen Dinh Diem** in 1963 and in forcing the **Thieu-Kieu** regime with their actions in 1969.

## SEIZURE OF ACCOUNTS and Cabinet Shake-up in Saigon

**PREMIER** **Tran Van Huong** had a close shave of it on March 5, 1969 in Saigon.

The thing was arrested there and then. He was found carrying papers of the "Government" army and a Colt 12. He is said to confess to having received 10,000 piastres for the coup. Nothing very unusual, indeed, considering the present political climate in this city. Eighteen hours earlier, **Tran Anh**, Rector ad interim of the Saigon University, had fallen to the bullets of another hired gunman and **Tran Van Huong** had sent a representative to his funeral. The same **Tran Anh** was a close friend and advisor to **Le Minh Tri**, ex-Minister of Education, himself a victim of a grenade in January last.

Remarkable enough, "the Saigon administration has refused to disclose the identity of the murderer who has just missed **Tran Van Huong** by a hairbreadth."

It is most disturbing that many have found, not without foundation, some link between the thugs who had taken the lives of a group of pro-Ky officers in May last year, the identity that killed **Le Minh Tri** in January and the 12 used against **Tran**

**Huong**. Hardly had **Tran Van Huong** recovered from the shock when **Nguyen Van Thieu** announced with a great ballyhoo on March 12 the reshuffling of his cabinet.

A vice-premier and eight new ministers and deputy ministers have been picked up to team up with **Tran Van Huong** (the "Government"). And what a "government"! A certain **Nguyen Van Vang**, ex-deputy of **Nguyen Dinh Diem** in the Western part of **Nam Bo**, was given the portfolio of rural areas, which **Huong** had conspired with his functions of Prime Minister. General **Tran Thieu Khiem** was promoted to Premier and invested with wide powers. He has been especially entrusted with "pacification" and "construction" and concurrently some affairs which allow him to control from top to bottom the administration as well as the police, and to distribute bribes at the provincial echelon.

It is also public knowledge that **Tran Thieu Khiem**, a close associate of **Thieu**, has been at daggers drawn with **Ky**. Let us add that **Nguyen Van Tan**, a chief of bureau under **Thieu**, has become Minister of Agriculture and

replacement of **Truong Thai Ton**, a Ky man.

In short, **Thieu** has killed several birds with one stone. He has clipped the wings of **Tran Van Huong** and ousted the last supporters of **Nguyen Cao Ky** from the governmental group while trying to cheat American and world opinion about his intention to discontinue the operations of "bases" of his government. As can be seen, he is a shrewd man who will not stop at anything to keep himself in power.

Such is the government which **H. Cabot Lodge**, the chief of the American delegation to the Paris Conference, has not ceased describing as a "constitutional" and "representative."

But the South Vietnamese are not to be taken in. All these palace quarrels that always end up in a shuffling of the cabinet members have only revealed the conflict between various political groupings in Saigon and the fragility of the **Thieu-Huong** alliance. More than that, they are demanding the replacement of the troops of traitors by a cabinet favouring restoration of peace in South Viet Nam.